employees strength in the Howrah Works, was to be brought down to 2995. The present strength there is 3105. The Government also gave guarantee for Rs. 55.50 crore towards working capital advances. The rehabilitation scheme has been implemented. Out of a total capital investment of Rs. 13.31 crores incurred in the Howrah Unit, machines worth Rs. 4.64 crore were imported from Italy in August, 1999 to strengthen the foundry unit. As per information available, these machines have been commissioned in October, 2000.

BSCL has not performed as envisaged in the rehabilitation scheme. howrah works in particular has been incurring heavy losses. These losses have led to depletion of working capital thereby resulting in delayed execution of orders. Wages and salaries to both workers and supervisory staff reported could not be paid since April, 2001. The BIFR reviewed the performance of the Company in a hearing held on 23rd February, 2001 and directed it to prepare a modified package.

Financial assistance to municipalities under IDSMT Scheme

*16. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of municipalities which have been approved for financial assistance under Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns Scheme (IDSMT) during 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 alongwith the amount of grant given to each municipality, State-wise; and

(b) whether the proposal from the Gujarat Government has been received by his Ministry for the year 2000-2001, for financial assistance under the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) During 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, 363 municipalities have been approved for financial assistance under the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Town Scheme. The State-wise details for 1999-2000 and for

2000-2001 are given in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix 193, Annexure No. 5].

(b) Yes, Sir. The details of central assistance released to 20 municipalities in Gujarat during 2000-2001 is given in Annexure. [*See* Appendix 193, Annexure No. 5]

VRS in Shipping Corporation of India

*17. SHRI K. M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Shipping Corporation of India has introduced VRS for its employees;

(b) if so, the number of employees applied for the Scheme, so far; and

(c) the number of employees allowed to take VRS?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) So far six employees have applied under the scheme.

(c) The scheme is open until end of August, 2001. All applications received will be processed only after the expiry of the last date for receipt of VRS applications.

Government Hospitals in Meghalaya

*18. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Government hospitals functioning at present in the State of Meghalaya for the treatment of a large number of patients;

(b) whether it is a fact that the existing Government hospitals in the State are not sufficient for the treatment of common people being suffered by various diseases;